

SEWER COMMISSION MINUTES

October 12, 2005 Minutes

Mr. Connolly - The regular meeting of the Town of North Smithfield Sewer Commission meeting was called to order on Wednesday, October 12, 2005 at 7:05 pm.

Roll Call - Mrs. Paul - In attendance were: Paul Nordstrom, Thomas McGee, III and Michael Connolly. Also in attendance were: Manny Alvarez and Patricia Paul, Secretary. Not in attendance was Linda-Jean Briggs due to being out of town on business.

Mr. Connolly - Approval of September 14, 2005 minutes. Are there any corrections, additions, deletions?

MOTION made by Mr. Nordstrom and seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye vote to approve September 14, 2005 minutes.

Mr. Connolly – The aye's have it. Motion carried 3-0 on an aye vote.

Mr. Connolly – Request to change the agenda and move Park Drive/Warren Avenue up on the agenda for the approval. No objections from the board.

2. PARK DRIVE/WARREN AVENUE RESIDENTS

Mr. Connolly stated that the board has received communications from James Geremia and Associates, consulting engineers for construction estimates for Alternate #2. The price is \$1,076,152.00. The chairwoman Mrs. Briggs wanted to inform the residents in the area regarding the estimate and see if they still wanted to move forward.

Many residents are concerned about the increase going from \$20,000.00 plus per home and increasing to \$44,000.00 per home and wants to know why the figure has doubled.

Mr. Hencler of Geremia and Associates explained to the residents that the water main and gas main would have to be relocated. It is also concrete based on Great Road and when you have a sewer it can not be near any other utilities which are all located on the north side of the street. He also stated that there are no sewers on Great Road.

A resident asked Mr. Connolly if all 17 residents had to agree?

Mr. Connolly's response was that in the final analysis, the Council would vote on it one way or the other and rely on the resident's input.

Several residents wanted to know what other options they have since their systems are going to fail, several lots are not big enough to put

in a system?

Mr. Connolly explained that several residents contacted several members of the Commission in the past and expressed these concerns and to find out what can be done. He stated that he couldn't answer why or because of topography, they needed a pump station or was it because of ledge, unfortunately he can't answer those questions because he wasn't on the Commission and to address the problem now. The way a sewer system is done, is engineering work is done and it cost money to put in the system and the residents of that system pay

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through their assessment, usually in the linear frontage type of formula. Because this affects a small group on difficult terrain and there is cost sharing, it falls upon the residents. There is no grant money available and have been researching it. There are two alternatives provided for the costs and what the impact is for each individual homeowner. Where do they go from there? The board doesn't have funding sources but the board can present the problem to the Council.

A resident had a question regarding the revolving fund loan.

Mr. Connolly responded by saying that the revolving fund loan is a source of funding. It is a loan and would have had to been paid back.

Mr. Nordstrom asked the residents that out of 17 homes, how many of them have failing systems?

One of the residents responded by saying approximately three quarters of the homes have failing systems.

One of the residents suggested to be notified well in advance of the meeting and would like to be notified via by certified letter because of receiving the letter right before the meeting and feels it was done all last minute.

Many of the residents feel that \$44,000.00 is an awful lot of money.

Mr. Nordstrom suggested that the Commission will help to approach URI. There is a group at URI that have placed many systems in really smaller lots and it maybe cheaper if they rebuild the residents sytem and they would put them in touch with URI.

Mr. Connolly explained to the residents to explore other alternatives.

A resident asked if there would be an opportunity for the town to help them fund this project?

Mr. Nordstrom's response was that there are several communities in the state that have on-site funds and they make loans like a sewer

assessment and they up-front the money to the homeowner to make the repairs as long it is a certified designer and meets all of the stipulations and the homeowner pays it back just as it is a loan. And there maybe several residents who are in dyer straights and need to do something.

A resident asked if it would be possible to get them the URI information via mail and feel that they need some place to start.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that it is a shared problem and the Council wanted to do something to address the problem. He suggested to set up a workshop with those affected people get URI to give a presentation and it is another option for those residents. And you never know what the prices are going to be until the bids come in.

Mr. Connolly stated that it is useful and now the residents can no longer speculate since these are hard numbers and now the residents are able to make informed decisions based on the hard numbers. It was an excellent suggestion to set up a workshop and look at alternative technologies.

One resident stated that she would like to move forward quickly with the alternatives and provide some results to them.

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Mr. Connolly stated that they will speak to URI and arrange a presentation and will notify all the affected people and they will receive a letter.

One resident suggested to provide them with more of a notice than less than a week if there will be future meetings.

Mr. Connolly agreed and will try to notify and provide them with a longer lead-time of less than a week notice.

MOTION made by Mr. Nordstrom and seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye vote to send a letter to the Council letting them know the price estimates of the project and suggest a workshop with them and with the URI people.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that if sewers go in that area the way the sewer usage ordinance works, as soon as the sewer goes by your home you have one year to connect. The resident will be assessed and will pay the annual cost for the sewerage to be treated if that this project were to go. So residents would not have a choice to connect or even if they didn't connect, they would have to pay the fee. Mr. Nordstrom stated that given the costs, the residents would need to express their concerns to the Council and they would help the residents make a decision. And that is why it is a shared problem. If the Council decides to refuse to sewer that area, then 17 residents would be affected and something else would need to be done to address that

problem and there will be 17 houses that will never connect to the sewer system.

A resident asked if there was a list of contractors that the Commission could provide to the them (residents) so they could try and get some estimates on their own or an on-site system?

Mr. Nordstrom stated that most of the residents are not faced with a conventional design. They would need to find someone who could design the system not someone who could build it, that is why he suggested to involve URI and offered those services before.

A resident asked if they were the only option?

Mr. Geremia stated that it is probably their best option.

One of the residents asked if it would be reasonable to expect that for those who have problems and need to come up with an alternative on their own, it they might have the commissions help in trying to convince the town and/or whatever sources to help them fund this project?

Mr. Nordstrom's response was that he would help in that regard. It is a matter of educating the Council. They are aware of part of what their problem is.

A resident asked if there were funds available for that?

Mr. Nordstrom's response was that he wasn't sure if something could be worked out.

Mr. Connolly also stated that they the Commission will do everything they can for them. For a public project, this is the best alternative that they could find. And take it to another step and seek more information and what

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individual alternatives that the Commission can find. Once the commission receives that information and as a group see where they can go from there. After they see the URI presentation, again there will be more information and then they can make rational decisions and have real data to work with.

A resident had a question if there was any way to connect into Woonsocket or the Morse Avenue side through the back and go through their meters and provide easements?

Mr. Connolly stated that this was brought up in the past and there was a reason that it was looked at another way but he couldn't remember as to why they couldn't go that way due to a technical reason and the option was dropped and then had to move forward. And will explore alternative technologies and try to find other

answers and look back at past minutes about going through the back and see why it was dropped. There was a technical objection that came up.

Mr. Connolly – The aye's have it. Motion carried 3-0 on an aye vote.

Mr. Connolly stated that they will be contacted of when the workshop will take place and will be contacted in good time.

3. PROPOSAL FROM MR. DULUDE

Mr. Keith Dulude who owns a property on Glen Avenue and has a failed septic system and getting it pumped every month. He need to replace his septic system or connect to the town sewer. The best way to connect to his sewer is to go from his back yard and through the park behind the Police Department out the Merrimack and he is asking for a 20ft. easement through the park/playground out to Merrimack to connect.

Mr. Connolly asked Mr. Dulude if it had been discussed with anyone else besides the Commission? Had he talked to the town Planners at all?

Mr. Dulude stated that he had a meeting with Bob Lowe, Bob Benoit, Manny Alvarez and Phil Kaczoraski,.and that is what everyone had come up with.

Mr. Connolly expressed that the Commission wouldn't have anything to do with granting a right away through the park.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that as far as connecting to the sewers, as long as it meets Manny's approval the Commission doesn't even get involved. Mr Dulude would have to pay the \$5,200.00 assessment fee and pay to connect it. But he is unsure of who to go through to get the easement.

Mr. Connolly stated that if there is federal money in the construction of the park, there would be other hoops to go through.

Mr. Dulude was told by Bob Lowe that before he presented his easement he had to come before the Sewer Commission to make sure he is ok with connecting.

Mr. Connolly stated that if it is ok with Manny Alvarez, then the Sewer Commission doesn't have any problems with him connecting.

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Mr. Dulude asked as to who would he ask for this easement?

Mr. Connolly's response was to talk with the town administration or Planning department.

Mr. Nordstrom asked to how is the message going to get to Mr. Bob Lowe stating he is all set with the Commission?

Mr. Alvarez will forward the message to Mr. Bob Lowe.

4. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Connolly read the correspondence received from Linda Scotland residing at 531 Victory Highway asking “If there are any plans or intentions to connect sewerage on Victory Highway between Slatersville Plaza and Halliwell School?” Mr. Connolly’s response was that there are currently no plans to connect sewerage in the Victory Highway section.

Mr. Connolly also reviewed a letter received from Mr. Dean P. Narodowy requesting to be placed on November 9th, 2005 agenda mentioning odors coming from the pump station on his property on Pound Hill Road. The letter states about some new equipment that was installed last spring/summer, an exhaust for when there are workers in the station. He is saying that the system goes on without people being there automatically.

Mr. Alvarez’s response was that it is venting because of the communiator (muffin monster) is broken and without it being there the barette gets full and the gases start backing up. So he has to have the fan running 24 hours 7 days per week to keep the air circulating in the wet well. With the fan off, the H₂S starts attacking

the cement and the metal and keeping it fresh and unfortunately, it does have an odor that comes out of it. And it is for the safety of the station.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that the muffin monster is still an issue.

Mr. Alvarez states that yes it is still an issue.

Mr. Connolly asked Mr. Alvarez if he is actually seeing the deterioration of the concrete?

Mr. Alvarez stated that when he was turning on the fan last year as he was entering the space, he noticed the H₂S was attacking the aluminum. That is the reason he decided to leave the fan on to keep the fresh air in there.

Mr. Connolly asked what is the status with the muffin monster?

Mr. Alvarez's response to that was that he approaches the Finance Director monthly and mentions it. Their response is that they are still looking for funding for the muffin monster and there is no money to do that project.

Mr. Connolly requests to have Mr. Narodowy be placed on the November 9th Sewer Commission agenda. If there are constant odor problems, there will be a liability associated with that at some point

and must be addressed.

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5. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDANT

Mr. Alvarez referred to his September report. He had done his weekly checks on Elizabeth Avenue and found that the flume was clogged with rocks and debris and the flume was flushed. He is still waiting for Mr. Fernando to get in touch with him and is not returning the calls from the town engineer, or himself and has not yet addressed the problems that they encountered when the manhole was knocked off and caused debris to fall into the manhole.

Silver Pines is working on their phase two of their construction.

He attended a ten hour OSHA Construction training course.

A resident from 70 Woonsocket Hill Road called and said that they are experiencing a blockage for the last three months. They hired a plumber to clear them. The plumber told them that the main was plugged. Mr. Alvarez called the Woonsocket Sewer Division because he was tied in between two manholes so he couldn't see either manhole. Woonsocket jetted the line and there was no restriction during the jetting and didn't see any evidence of something blocked in the main. He told the resident to call him again if he has a problem.

6. OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business

7. NEW BUSINESS

No New Business

8. ADJOURN

MOTION by Mr. McGee and seconded by Mr. Nordstrom and voted unanimously on an aye 3-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 P.M.

Mr. Connolly – The aye's have it. Motion carried 3-0 on an aye vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Patricia A. Paul

Sewer Commission Secretary